

Gratitude and prayer

~We never forget your kindness~

The Great East Japan Earthquake struck on March 11, 2011, and was severely damaged by the earthquake and tsunami, especially in the Tohoku region. We received a lot of support from domestic and overseas kayakers through writing on Facebook and emails, and 6 days after the earthquake, we launched and accepted QJ's support site so that we can respond to support from overseas. While messages of support from kayakers around the world and support such as donations arrived on a daily basis, some QJ members entered the disaster area and carried out support activities.



In early April, the charity sticker sold as a third support measure sold out in just a few days and was reprinted. We received a message at a festival in Malta that I would like to put up a poster with an illustration of a sticker and solicit donations to Japan. A member of the Australian kayak club "Greenland Downunder" has contacted us that they will sell QJ charity stickers in Australia and New Zealand.

A paddle craftsman who made a charity paddle and donated the sales, a kayaker who interwoven QJ's support program as a charity on an expedition in Ireland, Kayakers who donated funds to purchase Qaanaaq, those who posted articles on QJ's support information site on kayak magazines and website pages, those who reprinted links, Those who donated QJ's annual membership fee, those who supported QJ's support program even if they were not QJ members, I'm very grateful that many people have supported the disaster area through QJ. We donated the support fund we received to the Japanese Red Cross Society. I'm really thankful to you! Exchanges with kayakers and overseas clubs that are connected on a global scale have continued and are expanding. I strongly hope that you will continue to be connected in the future.



(From the left, Helen-san, Natalie-san (translator), Wayne-san, Mel-san)

GUTS2011 was held in Aomori Prefecture, which is also a disaster area, as a "Great East Japan Earthquake Reconstruction Assistance Charity Event" in September. Helen Wilson-san (present president of QAJAQ USA) who was requesting a lecturer participated without lecture's fee. In addition, Wayne Hanley-san and Mel Hanley-san, who preside over the Australian kayak club "Greenland Downunder" who offered to sell stickers, visited Japan and became the first overseas participants of the QJ event. And many QJ members gathered from all over Japan.



It has been 10 years since the earthquake. People recovered from despair but the disaster area is still in the process of reconstruction, and I think that the sadness and suffering of the people affected by the disaster continue. I think that what we can do is to continue to provide the support we can each of us, without forgetting to thank the earthquake, the disaster area, and the people who supported us.

Surrounded by the new threat of COVID-19 that occurred in 2020, the world is united and confronting difficulties while worrying about the situation of each other and each country. I once again feel the power that comes from connection with people, supporting each other, and encouraging each other. I hope that the day when people all over the world can live safely and with peace of mind will come as soon as possible.

(※Some texts and photos are quoted from Eiichi Ito-san's blog. "STORM ON Liner Notes".)



Qajaq JAPAN President Mayumi Minegishi